

The Antiquity of the poet Nāgarī Dās and his concubine Rasik Bihārī alias Banī Ṭhanī.—By PANDIT MŌHANLĀL VIṢHNULĀL PANDIA, M.A.S.B., M.R.A.S., M.G.V.S., &c. *Late Prime Minister of the Partābgarh State in Rājputānā.*

(Read February 1897.)

It is generally believed by the native vernacular scholars of our country, that there lived in Braj four Bhāshā poets bearing the name Nāgarī Dās. The first of them is said to be a disciple of Vallabhācārya, the second, the successor of Svāmī Hari-dās, the third, the follower of the Gōsvāmī Hit Harbans sect, and the fourth is one who is noticed by Dr. Grierson in his well-known work 'the Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindūstān' and Çivasimh in his 'Sarōj' and Bābū Rādhā-kṛṣṇa Dās of Benares in his little brochure the 'Life of Nāgarī Dās.'

Leaving the first three Nāgarī Dās for some other occasion, I take this opportunity to give a more extended notice of the fourth, who is well-known as a good poet, and also of his concubine, poetess Rasik Bihārī *alias* Banī Ṭhanī, who is still known to the public as some male poet. In the present paper, I have to endeavour to establish satisfactorily the antiquity of this couple of poetic talents.

For the sake of easy reference, I give the following summary of the enquiries of the previous researchers :—

(I) Dr. Grierson has the following notice in his work 'the Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindūstān,' at Nos. 95 and 638, pages 33 and 138 :—“The poet Nāgar, b. 1591 A.D. Haj. Possibly the same as a Nāgarī Dās mentioned in the preface to Rāg.”

And in the same work at Nos. 405 and 638, pages 101 and 138, he says :—“Rasik Bihārī, b. 1723 A.D. Rāg.”

Both notices are taken from Çivasimh's work, as quoted below.

(II) Çivasimh, in his Hindī work 'Sarōj,' has the following notices at pages 441 and 491 respectively :—

११ नागर कवि सं० १६४८ में उ० ॥ हजारों में इन के कवित्त हैं ॥

१७२ सफ़ा ॥

८० रसिक विहारौ सं० १७८० में उ० ॥

And he quotes the following specimens of Nāgarī Dās' metrical composition.

- (1) भादैं की कारौ अँधारी निशा लखि वादर मन्द फुहौ वरसावै ।
श्यामा-जी अपने ऊँचे अटा पै ककी रस रीति मलार है गावै ।
ता समै नागर के दृग दूरिते चातक खाति की मौज में पावै ।
पौन मया करि घँघुट टारै दया करि दामिनी दीप दिखावै ॥

i.e., Seeing the darkness of the very dark night of Bhādō clouds are showering a slight mizzle. Çyāmā-jī¹ (sitting) in her lofty attic contentedly sings after the manner of Malār.² Then the eyes of Nāgara, looking, like (those of) Cātaka,³ at Svāti⁴ from a distance, get intensely delighted.

The wind pitifully unveils her face, and the lightning kindly illuminates it.

- (2) गाँस गसीली ये बातैँ क्विपाइये इश्क ना गाइये गाइये होलियाँ ।
गैँद बहाने न बीरा चलाइये सूधै गुलाल उड़ाइये भोलियाँ ।
लोग बुरे चतुरे लखि पावैँगे दाबे रहौ दिल प्रीति कलोलियाँ ।
पाइ परौँ जी डरो टुक नागर हाइ करौ जिनि बोलियाँ ठोलियाँ ॥

i.e., Do not utter these piercing words and do not sing love, but sing the Hōli songs. Do not throw Bīrās⁵ under pretext of throwing the ball, but throw the bags of Gulāl⁶ in a straightforward manner. The men are clever and vicious, they will perceive it; hence suppress the frolics of this heart-felt love. Being afraid, O Nāgara! I fall at thy feet. Ah! Do not fling these jeers at me.

- (3) देवन की औ रमापति की दोऊ धाम की वेदन कीन बडाई ।
शङ्ख चक्र गदा पुनि पदम स्वरूप चतुरभुज की अधिकाई ।
अमृत-पान विमानन बैठिवो नागर के जिय नेक न भाई ।
स्वर्ग वैकुण्ठ में होरी जो नहिँ तौ कोरी कहा लै करै ठकुराई ॥

i.e., The Vedas have sung the praises of the Dēvas and Ramāpati and also of both the worlds. They have over-praised Chaturbhujā (Viṣṇu) who holds in his four hands a conch shell, discus, club, and

1 Wife of Kriṣṇa.

3 The Indian Cuckoo.

2 Songs of rainy season.

4 The star Arcturus.

5 A betel-leaf made up with a preparation of the areca nut, spices and chunam, &c.

6 A farinacious powder dyed red, which the Hindūs throw on each other during the indecent festivities and drunken frolics of the Hōli.

lotus. The drinking of nectar and sitting in the car of the gods is not pleasing to the heart of Nāgara. When there is not Hōlī in Svarga or Vaikuṅṭha (heaven), then our getting the mere Ṭhakurāī (or chiefship) there, would be of no use.

(III) Babū Rādhā-kṛṣṇa Dās, in his 'Nāgarī-dās-jī kā Jīwan Charitra,' says :—

(1) चौथे नागरीदास-जी हमारे ग्रन्थ के नायक महाराज जसवन्तसिंह-जी कृष्णागढ (राजपूताना) नरेश उपनाम श्री-नागरीदास-जी हैं ये महाप्रभु वल्लभाचार्य संप्रदाय के शिष्य थे । Page 5.

i.e., The fourth Nāgarī Dās-jī, the hero of our work, was Mahārāja Jasvant Simh-jī, king of Kṛṣṇaṅgarh (Rājputānā) *alias* Ṣri Nāgarī Dās-jī. He was a disciple of Mahāprabhu Vallabhācārya's sect.

(2) सब से पहिला ग्रन्थ जो इन का मिला उस का नाम 'विहार-चन्द्रिका' है । यह संवत् १७८८ में बना था । Page 10.

i.e., The first of all his works, which has been found, is entitled the Vihāra Candrikā. It was composed in Samvat 1788.

(3) तथापि यदि इसे प्रथम भी मान लीजिए तो इस में तो सन्देह नहीं कि इस समय इन की अवस्था बीस वर्ष से कम न रही होगी, अतएव इन के जन्म का समय संवत् १७६८ के लगभग मानिए । Page 10.

i.e., Even if we accept it to be the first work, then there is no doubt that his age at this time was not less than twenty years. Hence the year of his birth should be taken to have been about 1768.

(4) माघ संवत् १८१९ में 'वन-जन-प्रशंसक' ग्रन्थ बनाया जिस का वर्णन हम ऊपर कर चुके हैं । इस के पीछे का कोई ग्रन्थ नहीं मिलता यदि संवत् १७६८ के लगभग जन्म और संवत् १८१९ के लगभग मृत्यु मानी जाय तो ५१ वर्ष की अवस्था पायी । Page 22.

i.e., He has composed his work, Vana-jana-praṣaṁsa in Māgha of Samvat 1819, as we have stated above. And no work, composed after it, has yet been found. Thus, if we take his birth to have been in Samvat 1768 and his death in 1819, then it proves that he lived to an age of about 51 years.

(5) वहाँ श्रीवांके विहारी-जी (श्री-स्वामी हरिदास-जी के सेव्य ठाकुर) का दर्शन किया और वहाँ रसिक-विहारी काप दे कर कई पद बनाए । Page 16.

i.e., There (at Brindāban) he visited Ṣri Bāṅkē Bihārī-jī, the god
J. 1. 9

worshipped by Swāmī Ārī Haridās-jī, and composed several verses bearing the poetic name Rasik Bibārī.

Now, first of all, it is worth consideration whether the poet Nāgarī Dās who is the subject of this paper, and Nāgar, noticed by Dr. Grierson and the author of the Sarōj, is the same, or someone else, his name-sake. I believe, he is the same poet, because I have been able to identify the above mentioned specimens of the poet's metrical composition in the manuscript in my possession, which contains 57 works of this Nāgarī Dās. They are identified thus :—

A. There is an incomplete work in the manuscript in my possession at No. 38, and page 192, entitled Barkhā kē kavitta, which contains eight kavittas only. The first specimen of the Āivasimh Sarōj is to be found there, at No. 7, with slight differences in its reading. It reads thus :—

भादौं की कारी अंधारी निसा भुक्ति वादर मन्द फुहौं वरसावै ।
 स्यामा जू आपनी ऊँची अटा पै ककी रस मीत भला रहि गावै ।
 ता समैँ मोहन के द्विग दूरितैँ आतुर रूप की भीष सौँ पावै ।
 पौन मया करि घँघट टारै दया करि दामनी दीप दिखावै ॥ ७ ॥

The great difference in the above reading is the word *Mōhan* instead of the name of the poet Nāgar in the third line.

B. There is a complete work in the MS. at No. 35, and page 184, entitled the Hōrī kē kavitta, containing 19 kavittas in all. The second specimen is found there, at No. 19, the reading of which is as follows :—

गाँस गसीली ये बातैँ छिपाइये इस्क न गाइये गाइये होलियाँ ।
 गैँद वहानैँ न वीरा चलाइये सूधैँ गुलाल चलाइये भोलियाँ ।
 लोग बुरे चतुरे लखि पावैँगे दावैँ रहो दिल प्रीति कलोलियाँ ।
 पाय परी जी डरौ टुव भावते हाय करो मति बोलियाँ ठोलियाँ ॥ १६ ॥

In this also the word *bhāvatē* occurs instead of the name of the poet Nāgar in the fourth line.

C. And there is another complete work, called the Phāga Bihāra, in my MS. at No. 41, and page 256, in which the third specimen of the Sarōj is mentioned at No. 8, as a Savaiyā. The following is a reading thereof :—

देवनि के रू रमापति के दोऊ धाम की देवनि कौनी बडाई ।
 सङ्गु औ चक्र गदा अरु पद्म सरूप चतुर्भुज की अधिकारी ।

अमृत-पान विमाननि बैठि बोली जेती कही तेती एक न भाई ।

स्वर्ग वैकुण्ठ मैँ होरी जो नाहौँ तो कोरी कहा लै करै ठकुराई ॥ ८ ॥

The latter part of the third line greatly differs in reading from that of the specimen. In this work the poet has signed only the concluding stanzas, No. 43, 45, 46 and 48 with the name of Nāgariyā, Nāgar, Nāgarī and Nāgarī Dās and the rest are without his poetic name.

Having made the identification of our poet's metrical compositions, I now proceed to show the result of my independent researches. I have spared no trouble in checking my inquiries by reference to the Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ State, in Rājputānā, of which the poet was really a ruling Chief. Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ is a petty Native State under the Jaipur Residency. And the Rāṭhaur clan which rules over it, is an offshoot of the illustrious House of Jōdhpur. The founder of the State was Mahārāj Kṛṣṇa-simh, second son of Mahārāja Udaya-simh of Jōdhpur.

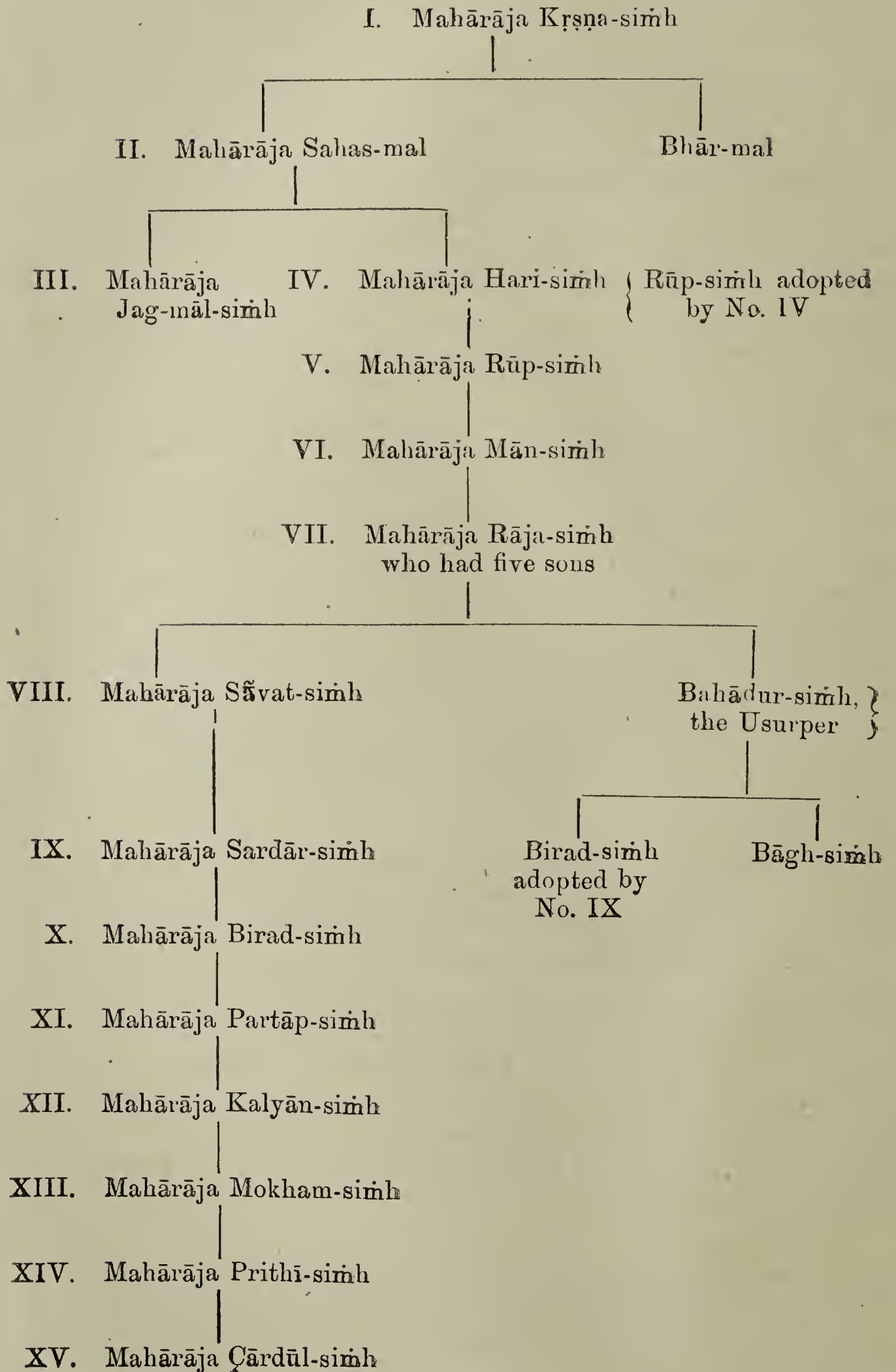
Our poet, Nāgarī Dās, was the eighth in descent from the founder of the Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ State. He was the third son of Mahārāja Rāja-simh. His royal name was Mahārāja Sāvāt-simh, and the Vaiṣṇava appellation was Nāgarī Dās. He has signed his verses by his poetic names, such as Nāgar, Nāgariyā, Nāgarī, and Nāgarī Dās, &c. Bābū Rādhā-kṛṣṇa Dās, in his Hindī book, wrongly names him Mahārāja Jasvant-simh of Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ. For, he is generally known throughout Rājputānā as Mahārāja Sāvāt-simh of Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ, and we find this name in all the biographical treatises of the Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ family extant in Rājputānā. The genealogical table on page 68 will show that there had been no such ruling chief as Jasvant-simh in the Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ family from its commencement.

He (Nāgarī Dās) was born in Vikrama Saṁvat 1756 on the 12th of Pauṣa Vadi=1699 A.D., was installed on the throne in V. S. 1805 on the 15th of Vaiçākha Çudi=1748 A.D., and placing his son Sardār-simh upon the Gaḍī on the 10th Āçvina Çudi of V. S. 1814=1757 A.D., retired to lead the life of a Vaiṣṇava devotee at Brindāban, and finally died there on the 3rd Bhādrapada Çukla of V. S. 1821=1764 A.D., thus living to an age of 64 years 8 months and 6 days. When these dates have been confirmed by the Darbār's office of Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ, I do not see any reason why we should believe Saṁvat 1648=1591 A.D. of the Sarōj and that conjectured by Bābū Rādhā-kṛṣṇa Dās of Benares to be the date of our poet.

The poet's exploits of his early days are thus related in the memorandum received by me from the Kṛṣṇa-ṅarḥ State:—

(1.) In the V. S. year 1766, when he was only ten years old, he was once coming back from the Imperial Darbār at Dehli. In the way he

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE KRṢṆAGARH FAMILY:



met a rabid elephant, who in his fury defied all control of the Mahauts (drivers) who were loudly warning people to get out of the way. But he did not care a bit about it, and undauntedly faced the infuriated animal, which rushed upon him, but was driven back by a stroke of his sword upon the trunk. The picture representing this scene is kept at the Kṛṣṇaḡarh Darbār, together with a photograph of it.

(2.) In V. S. 1769, when 13 years old, he received some wounds in slaying Hārā Jaita-simh of Būndī.

(3.) In 1771 V. S., at a grand dancing party in which were present his father Mahārāja Rāja-simh, Mahārāja Bhīma-simh of Kōtā, Mahārāja Gaja-simh of Çivapur, and Mahārāja Gōpāla-simh of Bhadōriyā, &c., a venomous serpent somehow made its way into his *jāma* (garments). He did not cause excitement by revealing the fact, but simply crushed out the fangs of the reptile, and leaving the hall on some excuse, threw it off at some distance. This was afterwards told by his servants. He was at this time only fifteen years old.

(4.) In V. S. 1774, an expedition conducted by the Mahārājas of Jaypur and Kōtā, &c., was sent by the Emperor against the Chief of Thūn, and although fighting continued for some time, it was not conquered. Afterwards the poet was sent there. He no sooner reached the place, than he stormed the fortress, and the gate of it was broken open by his elephant.

(5.) When he was only twenty years old, he alone killed a lion while hunting.

(6.) In 1792 V. S. when the Dakhanī Malār went from Gujarāt into Mārvār, the poet did not pay him any tribute, though there was a deal of fighting between them. Thereupon Bāji-rāv said to Malār the following couplet :—

दोहा ॥ वाजी-राव मलार सँ कहतो गयो कथाह ।

और राव सब राव है साँवत बात अथाह ॥

i.e., 'Thus said Bāji-rāva to Malār—All other Rāvas are simply Rāvas in name, but Sāvat's case is too deep to be fathomed' (*i.e.*, he is a really powerful prince).

It is said, the old father of our poet, Mahārāja Rāja-simh, had entrusted him with the administration of the state, a few years previous to his death. Accordingly Nāgarī Dās, then the Mahārāja Kumār Sāvat-simh, managed the affairs with great prudence and kept uninterrupted tranquillity during this period, until his father died. When, in 1804 V. S., he was attending the Imperial Court at Dehli, his old father died suddenly at Kṛṣṇaḡarh. So he was formally installed there by the Emperor Aḡmad Shāh on the 5th Vaiçākha Çudi, of V. S. 1805, to the Chiefship of Kṛṣṇaḡarh. Having assumed for-

mally the royal title, he prepared to march to the capital, but in the meantime he received the unhappy intelligence that his younger brother Bahādūr-simh had usurped the throne. Thereupon he was sent to his principality with a small imperial force by the Emperor. On his return, a desperate fight took place between the two brothers, but Bahādūr-simh could not be subdued. Being utterly routed he returned to Dehli and tried all he could to obtain fresh military assistance from the Emperor. But as Bahādūr-simh had secured the aid of the Mahārāja of Mārvār, and the Emperor himself was too weak a ruler at that time to side with him, so he declined. Being greatly disheartened, he left Dehli and came to Braj and lived there. From this place he again endeavoured his utmost to gain the favour of the Mahrāthas, and after a short time he sent his son Sardār-simh with their army into Rājputānā. Thus Sardār-simh, by the co-operation of the Mahrāthas, regained the Rāj of Kṛṣṇaṅgarh. Then, in V. S. 1814, he proceeded to his capital and having placed his son, Sardār Simh, upon the throne, on the 10th Āṣvina Çudi, he finally returned to Brindāban to devote himself to the duties of asceticism. What a pity it is, that our poet's reign has been both unhappy and troublesome, from the beginning to the end !

The following is a complete list of the poet's Hindī works. I have very carefully compared it with the one received from the Kṛṣṇaṅgarh State. All the works can be had from the State Library at Kṛṣṇaṅgarh. The first fifty-seven works mentioned in the list I have with me. And the last two, namely, Baina-bilās and Gupta-ras-prakāṣa are not available even at Kṛṣṇaṅgarh.

List of Works.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Singār-sāra or Braj-lilā-pada-prasaṅga. | 15. Phāga-bilāsa. |
| 2. Gōpī-prēma-prakāṣa. | 16. Grīṣam-bihāra. |
| 3. Pada-prasaṅga-mālā. | 17. Pāvāsa-pacīsī. |
| 4. Braj-vaikuṅṭh-tulā. | 18. Gōpī-baina-bilāsa. |
| 5. Braj-sāra. | 19. Rāsa-rasa-latā. |
| 6. Bihāra-candrikā. | 20. Raina-rūpa-rasa. |
| 7. Bhōr-lilā. | 21. Çīta-sāra. |
| 8. Prāta-rasa-mañjarī. | 22. Ishq-ciman. |
| 9. Bhōjan-ānand-āṣṭaka. | 23. Majlis-mandan. |
| 10. Jugala-rasa-mañjarī. | 24. Aril-āṣṭaka. |
| 11. Phūla-bilāsa. | 25. Sādā kī mājha. |
| 12. Gōdhan-āgamana. | 26. Barkhā kī mājha. |
| 13. Dōhn-ānand. | 27. Hōrī kī mājha. |
| 14. Lagan-āṣṭaka. | 28. Kṛṣṇa-janmōtsava-kavitta. |
| | 29. Priyā-janmōtsava-kavitta. |

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 30. Sāñjhī kē kavitta. | 54. Nakha-sikha. |
| 31. Rāsa kē kavitta. | 55. Chūtak-kavitta. |
| 32. Cāndnī kē kavitta. | 56. Carcariyā. |
| 33. Divārī kē kavitta. | 57. Rēkhatā. |
| 34. Gōvardhana-dhāran. | 58. Manōratha-mañjarī. |
| 35. Hōrī kē kavitta. | 59. Rāma-caritra-mālā. |
| 36. Phāga-gōkul-āṣṭaka. | 60. Pada-prabōdha-mālā. |
| 37. Hindōrā kē kavitta. | 61. Jugal-bhakti-binōda. |
| 38. Barkhā kē kavitta. | 62. Ras-ānukram kē dōhā. |
| 39. Bhakti-maga-dīpikā. | 63. Çarad kī māñjha. |
| 40. Tīrth-ānand. | 64. Sāñjhī-phūla-bīnana-samain-
samvad. |
| 41. Phāga-bihāra. | 65. Basanta-barnan. |
| 42. Bāla-binōda. | 66. Phāga-khēlan-samain-
ānukram kē kavitta. |
| 43. Sujan-ānanda. | 67. Ras-ānukram kē kavitta. |
| 44. Bana-binōda. | 68. Nikuñja-bilāsa. |
| 45. Bhakti-sāra. | 69. Gōvinda-parcaī. |
| 46. Dēha-dasā. | 70. Bana-jana-praçamśa. |
| 47. Bairāga-batī. | 71. Chūtaka-dōhā. |
| 48. Rasika-ratnāvalī. | 72. Utsava-mālā. |
| 49. Kali-bairāga-ballī. | 73. Pada-muktāvalī. |
| 50. Arila-pacīsī. | 74. Baina-bilāsa. |
| 51. Chūtaka-pada. | 75. Gupta-rasa-prakāça. |
| 52. Pārāyan-prakāsa. | |
| 53. Sikha-nakha. | |

According to the laudable practice of the vernacular poets of our country of dating their works, the poet has dated some of his important works. I give here a list of those which I have seen and read in chronological order, and trust that it may be useful in many cases :—

I. Manōratha-mañjarī, dated Āçvina Vadi 14th, Tuesday, Vikrama Samvat 1780 = 1723 A.D.

दोहा ॥ संवत सतरा सै असी, चोदस मङ्गल-वार ।
प्रगट मनोरथ-मञ्जरी, वदि आसू अवतार ॥

II. Rasika-ratnāvalī, dated Bhādō Çudi 1st, Tuesday, V. S. 1782 = 1725 A.D.

दोहा ॥ सत्तरै सै वइयासिये, भादेँ सुदि भृगु-वार ।
तिथि परिवा कीनी इहै, लौजे सन्त सुधार ॥

III. Bihāra-candrikā, dated Sāvan, V. S. 1788 = 1731 A.D.

दोहा ॥ सत्तरै सै अक्यासिया, संवत साँवन मास ।
नव विहार यह चन्द्रिका, करी नागरीदास ॥

IV. Nikuñja-vilāsa, dated V. S. 1794 = 1737 A.D.

V. Kali-bairāga-balli, dated Sāvan, V. S. 1795 = 1738 A.D.

दोहा ॥ सत्तरा सै पच्याण्वे, संवत् सावण मास ।
कलिवल्लीबैराग की, करी नागरीदास ॥

VI. Bhakti-sāra, dated Sāvan Vadi 2nd, Thursday, V. S. 1799 = 1742 A.D.

कुण्डलिया ॥ सुख पायौ परन भयै, ग्रन्थ जु भाषा चार ।
सतरा सै निनाँनवै, द्वैज घौस गुरुवार ॥
द्वैज घौस गुरुवार माँस सावन मन भावन ।
दृष्णपक्ष सुभ मन्त्र सन्त जन अवन सुहावन ।
भक्ति-सार उच्चार कियौ निज मन समुभायौ ।
नागरीदास न कहुँ विमुष काहू सुख पायौ ॥

VII. Pārāyan-bidhi-prakās, dated Sāvan, V. S. 1799 = 1742 A.D.

दोहा ॥ सत्तरै सै निनाँनवै संवत सावन मास ।
पारायन जु प्रकास-विधि कियौ नागरीदास ॥

VIII. Braja-sāra, dated Pōṣa Çudi 9th, Sunday, V. S. 1799 = 1742 A.D.

दोहा ॥ सतरै सै निनाँनवै, पोस जु सुदि रवि-वार ।
नौमी नागरीदास यह कियो ग्रन्थ ब्रज-सार ॥

IX. Gōpi-prēma-prakāṣa—dated Jētha Çukla, V. S. 1800 = 1743 A.D.

दोहा ॥ संवत अठारै सै सुकल पक्ष जेठ सुभ मास ।
गोपी प्रेम प्रकाश यह, कियौ नागरीदास ॥

X. Braja-baikunṭha-tulā, dated the Basant-day, i.e., Māgha Çukla 5th, which is called Vasanta-pañcamī, V. S. 1801 = 1744 A.D.

दोहा ॥ संवत अठारै सै जु इक, दिन वसन्त सुभ मास ।
ब्रज-वैकुण्ठ-तुला कियौ ग्रन्थ नागरीदास ॥

XI. Bhakti-maga-dīpikā, dated Kvāra Kṛṣṇa 3rd, Thursday, V. S. 1802 = 1745 A.D., at Rūp-nagar (former capital of Kṛṣṇagarh State).

दोहा ॥ संवत अष्टादस सत जु द्वै, क्वार तीज गुरु-वार ।
रूप-नगर विचि दृष्णपक्ष भयौ ग्रन्थ विस्तार ॥

XII. Phāga-bihāra, dated Madhu Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa, V. S. 1808=1751 A.D., on the banks of the river Gaṅgā.

दोहा ॥ संवत अष्टदस सत जु पुन, अष्ट वर्ष मधु मास ।
ग्रन्थ गङ्ग-तटि कृष्ण-पक्ष, कियो नागरीदास ॥

XIII. Jugala-bhakti-binōd, dated Māgha, V. S. 1808=1751 A.D., at Kamāū.

दोहा ॥ अष्टदस सत अष्ट पुनि, संवत माघ सुमास ।
जुगल-भक्ति-गुन ग्रन्थ यह, कियो नागरीदास ॥
निकट कमाऊं पर्वतनि, विकट विटप की भीर ।
तहाँ ग्रन्थ रचना भई, नदी कौसिकी तीर ॥

XIV. Bana-binōd, dated Madhu and Kṛṣṇa Pakṣa, V. S. 1809=1752 A.D.

दोहा ॥ समत अठार स जु नव, कृष्ण-पक्ष मधु मास ।
बन बिनोद कल ग्रन्थ यह कियो नागरीदास ॥

XV. Bal-binōd—dated Āçvin Çukla 6th, Tuesday, V. S. 1809=1752 A.D.

दोहा ॥ समत अष्टदस सत जु नव, मास अस्नि भृगु-वार ।
तिथि षष्ठी अरु शुक्ल-पक्ष रच्यौ ग्रन्थ विस्तार ॥

XVI. Tirth-ānanda, dated Māgha, V. S. 1810=1753 A.D., at Brindāban.

दोहा ॥ माघ अष्टदस सत जु दस, विचि वृन्दावन वास ।
ग्रन्थ तीरथानन्द यह, कियो नागरीदास ॥

XVII. Sujan-ānand, dated at Barsānā in the Mathurā District, V. S. 1810=1753 A.D.

दोहा ॥ समत अष्टदस सत जु दस, बरसाने के वास ।
ग्रन्थ सु-सुजनानन्द यह, कियो नागरी दास ॥

XVIII. Bana-jana-praçamsa, dated Māgha, V. S. 1819=1762 A.D.

दोहा ॥ अष्टादस सत दस जु नव, संवत माघ सु मास ।
बन जन-प्रसन्स ग्रन्थ यह, कियो नागरी-दास ॥

It is clear that the poet was a staunch follower of the Vallabhā-cāryan sect of the Vaiṣṇavas. So, all his works on religious subjects are pervaded by a spirit of the doctrines peculiar to that sect. They are written in the erotic style of poetry, representing his passionate adora-

tion of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. There are only two of his works, named the Pada-prasaṅga-mālā and Tirth-ānanda, from which we can extract a few threads of historical value. In the former he gives the legends of the previous Vaiṣṇava saints in connection with their metrical compositions, and in the latter an account of his own pious ramblings in and beyond Braj is related.

It is still wrongly believed by the vernacular poets of our country that the verses, bearing the poetic name Rasik Bihārī, which are found here and there in the works of this poet, are either of his own composition, or of some other male poet. During the long period of my services in Rājputānā, I have been able to make out that there was a concubine of this poet, named Baṇī Ṭhaṇī (*i. e.*, elaborately adorned or decked out). She was a poetess and signed her composition by the aforesaid poetic name. In support of this my discovery, I think it necessary to quote here the following text of a passage of the Hindī memorandum received by me from the Kṛṣṇaṅgarh State :—

और जहाँ रसिक-बिहारी जी के भोग के कवित्त तथा पद इन साहिबों के ग्रन्थों में हैं सो इन साहिबों की खवास पासवान यानी उपस्त्री थी। उन का नाम बणी-ठणी जी था। वह भी कविता बजत सुन्दर बनाते थे। रसिक-बिहारी का भोग रखते थे। और जहाँ महाराज श्री-नागरीदास-जी अपने ग्रन्थ में इन के पद या कवित्त लिखते वहाँ आन कवि ऐसा सङ्केत लिखते हैं ॥

i. e., 'The Kavittas and Padas, bearing the poetic name Rasik Bihārī, which are found in the works of this gentleman (Nāgarī Das), are (the compositions) of his Khavāsa or Pāsavāna (*i. e.*, concubine). Her name was Baṇī Ṭhaṇī. She also wrote very beautiful poetry and used to sign her verses with the poetic name of Rasik Bihārī. Where Mahārāja Ṣrī Nāgarī Dās-jī has introduced her padas or kavittas in his works, he has mentioned her name emblematically as *Ān Kavi* (or 'another poet').'

I am still trying my best to find out the real name of this woman, because I do not believe 'Baṇī Ṭhaṇī' to be her true name. I think it to be what they call in English a sobriquet. It is said that this woman remained faithful and devoted to her lover even in the days of his adversity. It is evident from the following verses of the poet which occur in the Tirthānand, that she was with him, when he visited the shrine of Bāṅkē Bihārī-jī at Brindāban in his pilgrimage through the Braj :—

दोहा ॥ बनी विहारनि रससनी निकट विहारी-लाल ।
पान कियौ इम द्विगन तैँ अनुपम रूप रसाल ॥

पद्धरी ॥ तहाँ पद गाये औसर सञ्जोग ।
विचि रसिक-बिहारी ही कौ भोग ॥

i.e., 'She became a lively sensuous maiden with the deity Bihārī-lāl, and drank with her eyes the excellent juice of the sugar-cane of divine beauty. On this occasion we both sang there the verses, bearing the poetic name of Rasik Bihārī.'

'The following verses, occurring in the Utsava-māla, are a specimen of her metrical composition :—

कुञ्ज महल मैँ आज रङ्ग होरी हो ।
फाग खेल मैँ बना-बनी कौन्है रही पटगठ जेरी हो ॥
मुदितन्है नारि गुलाल उडावैँ गावैँ गारी दुजँ ओरी हो ।
दूलह रसिक-बिहारी सुन्दर दुलहिनि नवल किसोरी हो ॥

i.e., 'To-day there is the merry-making of Hōlī in the bowery palace. In playing Phāga (or frolics of Hōlī) the edges of the shawls of the Banā-Banī (*i.e.*, bride and bridegroom) were tied together. The women, in pleasure, blow up Gulāl powder and sing abusive songs on both sides. The bridegroom is the beautiful Rasik Bihārī, and the bride is Naval-Kisōrī, (*i.e.*, the beautiful young maiden).'

